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8 June 1964

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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DAILY BRIEF

*Laos: The military situation remains fluid.

Neutralist elements have reoccupied the northern and western slopes of Phou Kout, a strategic hill overlooking Route 7 which they abandoned under fire on 5 June. Pathet Lao forces, positioned to the east of Phou Kout, do not appear to be pressing their attack.

A US Navy pilot was evacuated this morning from the jungle about 20 miles southwest of Ban Ta Viang after his jet aircraft had been downed by enemy fire yesterday. He had been flying as a fighter escort to a photo reconnaissance mission. Search and rescue operations are still under way for the pilot of a jet photo plane which was shot down the previous day in the hills a few miles south of the Pathet Lao strong-point at Ban Ban.

Peiping radio, reporting on the 6 June shoot-down, claimed that the flight had "violated Laotian territorial air and carried out reconnaissance harassment." Peiping further charged that US flights on 7 June had launched rockets against the village of Khang Khay.

On 2 June, Pathet Lao chief Souphanouvong in a message to the Geneva co-chairmen had protested US jet flights as a "crude intervention in Laotian internal affairs."

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*South Vietnam: [Dissension within anti-Communist ranks continues to plague Premier Khanh.]

[A demonstration yesterday in Saigon by more than 35,000 Catholics brought into the open festering grievances held by this important religious minority. The Catholics feel that they are being made scapegoats for the excesses of the Diem regime, and accuse Buddhist extremists of seeking blind revenge.]

[Although not directly critical of Khanh, the Catholics charge that the government is becoming increasingly responsive to Buddhist pressures. Demonstration leaders exhorted the government to end discrimination and to adopt a "just and more effective national policy" against Communism.]

[The demonstration, which was designed to stiffen resistance to Buddhist pressures, had been contemplated for several weeks. The organizers took special precautions to minimize the danger of Viet Cong exploitation.]

[Khanh, troubled by political infighting within the government, has been working to ease religious friction. The life sentence handed down this weekend to Major Dang Sy, Catholic commander of troops who fired on Buddhist demonstrators at Hue in May 1963, fulfilled Khanh's private assurances that the death penalty would be avoided. Even so, the trial served to sharpen Catholic bitterness and may have longer range repercussions.]

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DAILY BRIEF

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South Korea: [Student demonstrations have abated, but friends and foes of ousted strong man Kim Chong-pil are continuing to maneuver against each other.]

[Despite President Pak's long-standing attachment to Kim, the President apparently has yielded to pressure to send Kim out of the country, as he did in early 1963. Kim is said to have agreed to go to the US, but he may attempt a countermove.]

[Kim's supporters were earlier reported planning a purge of his foes in the National Assembly and of opposition leaders in public life. They would extend martial law and adopt a "policy of terror" against students, press, and the opposition generally.]

[Kim reportedly recommended such a course to Pak when the latter finally accepted his resignation as chairman of the ruling Democratic Republican Party. Special military forces have already attempted to intimidate the press, and the national police have prepared lists of those to be arrested.]

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